

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

TIMOTHY ROBENHORST,

Plaintiff,

v.

Case No. 07-C-94

WISCONSIN PROBATION AND PAROLE, et al.

Defendants.

MEMORANDUM AND ORDER

Plaintiff Robenhorst, who is proceeding pro se, lodged a civil rights complaint under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, alleging that his civil rights were violated. Plaintiff is currently incarcerated at the Brown County Jail.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1), a prisoner plaintiff is required to pay the statutory filing fee of \$350.00 for a federal lawsuit. If a prisoner does not have the money to pay the filing fee up front, he or she can request leave to proceed *in forma pauperis* in order to pay the fee over time. To proceed with an action *in forma pauperis*, the prisoner must complete a petition and affidavit to proceed *in forma pauperis* and return it to the court with a certified copy of the prisoner's trust account statement showing transactions for the prior six months. The court then assesses and, when funds exist, collects from the plaintiff at the time the action is filed an initial partial filing fee of twenty percent of the average monthly deposits to or the average monthly balance in the prisoner's trust account for the six-month period immediately preceding the filing of the complaint.¹

¹In no event will a prisoner be prohibited from bringing a civil action because he or she has no assets and no means by which to pay the initial partial filing fee. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(4).

In this case, the plaintiff has filed a certified copy of his prison trust account statement for the six-month period immediately preceding the filing of his complaint. He also filed the required affidavit of indigence. He lacks the funds to pay an initial partial filing fee, so that fee has been waived. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(4). Upon review of the trust account statement and affidavit, I am satisfied that plaintiff is unable to pay the statutory filing fee in this case. Leave to proceed *in forma pauperis* therefore will be granted.

Next, the court is required to screen complaints brought by prisoners seeking relief against a governmental entity or officer or employee of a governmental entity. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(a). The court must dismiss a complaint or portion thereof if the prisoner has raised claims that are legally "frivolous or malicious," that fail to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or that seek monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1)-(2).

A claim is legally frivolous when it lacks an arguable basis either in law or in fact. *Denton v. Hernandez*, 504 U.S. 25, 31 (1992); *Neitzke v. Williams*, 490 U.S. 319, 325 (1989). The court may, therefore, dismiss a claim as frivolous where it is based on an indisputably meritless legal theory or where the factual contentions are clearly baseless. *Neitzke*, 490 U.S. at 327.

A complaint, or portion thereof, should be dismissed for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted if it appears beyond doubt that the plaintiff can prove no set of facts in support of the claim or claims that would entitle him to relief. *Hishon v. King & Spalding*, 467 U.S. 69, 73 (1984) (citing *Conley v. Gibson*, 355 U.S. 41, 45-46 (1957)). In reviewing a complaint under this standard, the court must accept as true the allegations of the complaint in question, *Hosp. Bldg. Co. v. Trs. of Rex Hosp.*, 425 U.S. 738, 740 (1976), construe the pleading in the light most favorable to the plaintiff and resolve all doubts in the plaintiff's favor, *Jenkins v. McKeithen*, 395 U.S. 411, 421 (1969).

The court is obliged to give the plaintiff's pro se allegations, however inartfully pleaded, a liberal construction. *Haines v. Kerner*, 404 U.S. 519, 520-21 (1972). To state a claim for relief under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, a plaintiff must allege: (1) that he was deprived of a right secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States, and (2) that the deprivation was visited upon him by a person acting under color of state law. *Gomez v. Toledo*, 446 U.S. 635, 640 (1980).

Plaintiff alleges that his probation was revoked because he failed to produce a large sum of cash in response to the invitation to bribe state officials. He requests that this court overturn his probation revocation and award damages of some \$66,664, as well as punitive damages of \$1 million.

This case must be dismissed under the rule of *Heck v. Humphrey*, 512 U.S. 477 (1994), because success in this lawsuit would necessarily imply the invalidity of the plaintiff's parole revocation. *Knowlin v. Thompson*, 207 F.3d 907, 909 (7th Cir. 2000) (requisite showing "would necessarily imply the invalidity of [plaintiff's] Wisconsin parole revocation, which *Heck* instructs cannot be shown through a § 1983 suit. *Heck* therefore bars the instant suit.") In other words, the plaintiff cannot bring a § 1983 suit in federal court challenging his revocation unless that revocation has been overturned in another forum; this § 1983 suit is not the proper venue for overturning a state probation revocation proceeding. Because plaintiff has failed to set forth cognizable constitutional or federal claims, the case will be dismissed.

IT IS ORDERED that plaintiff's request to proceed *in forma pauperis* is granted.

IT IS ORDERED that the custodian of the plaintiff or his designee shall collect from the plaintiff's jail trust account the \$350 balance of the filing fee by collecting monthly payments from the plaintiff's prison trust account in an amount equal to twenty percent of the preceding month's

income credited to the prisoner's trust account and forwarding payments to the clerk of the court each time the amount in the account exceeds \$10.00 in accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2). The payments shall be clearly identified by the case name and number assigned to this action.

IT IS ALSO ORDERED that copies of this order be sent to Captain Jack Jadin and the Account Clerk at the Brown County Jail, 3030 Curry Lane, Green Bay, Wisconsin 54311, as well as the Brown County Corporation Counsel, 305 E. Walnut St., Green Bay, Wisconsin 54301.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this action is dismissed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2)(B) and 1915A(b)(1) for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.

IT IS ORDERED that the clerk of court document that this inmate has brought an action that was dismissed under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2)(B) and 1915A(b)(1) for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.

IT IS ORDERED that the clerk of court document that this inmate has incurred a "strike" under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(g).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the clerk of court enter judgment accordingly.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that any appeal from this matter would not be taken in good faith pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3) unless the plaintiff offers bonafide arguments supporting his appeal.

Dated this 31st day of January, 2007.

s/ William C. Griesbach
William C. Griesbach
United States District Judge